

Vita Audio R1

TYPE DAB/FM table radio

PRICE £160

CONTACT ☎ 01702 601410 @ www.vitaaudio.com

The 'audiophile table radio' market was effectively created by Tivoli, whose delightful little models were distributed in the UK for many years by Ruark, before moving recently to Armour HE. Vita Audio, the latest company apparently inspired by the Tivoli phenomenon, is not unrelated to Ruark, but the product itself is by no means a clone. For a start, it's a DAB/FM tuner and its look and ergonomics are substantially different. Tuning apart, it features alarm functions and as such is just as home in the bedroom as in the kitchen, but we're more interested in the sonic performance. Does it compare well to Tivoli and to existing DAB models?

Vita has equipped the R1 with a '7W nominal' amplifier and an unusually beefy-looking loudspeaker and as a result there's considerably more heft to the sound than most DAB competition can provide. Compared with Tivoli, the sound may not always be quite as clear but there's more bass extension, and anyway comparison is slightly

confused by the fact that Tivoli has better FM reception but no DAB. In many ways, a table radio like this is the best way to hear DAB as the high-frequency twittering that plagues it is less audible through a single speaker (probably not being heard on-axis). Should you wish to go stereo, there's a socket for an extra speaker (not yet available) and a stereo line output on phono sockets: you also get a headphone jack and, usefully, a line input for MP3 players etc. You'll look in vain for funky DAB features like pause and recording, but on purely sound terms this is currently the model to beat. **HFC**

Richard Black



BEST BUY

HI-FI CHOICE
magazine



VERDICT

CONCLUSION

It's simple, it's mono and it's not the cheapest, but this is about the best-sounding DAB table radio on sale today.

HI-FI CHOICE
magazine
90%

Supra Sword-ISL

TYPE Interconnect cable

PRICE £379 (1m terminated pair)

CONTACT ☎ 01223 441299 @ www.supracables.co.uk

Supra Sword-ISL is designed as the natural partner for the Sword speaker cable, which itself received an Editor's Choice back in *HFC* 287. Described as a 'global limited edition', the first 3,000 pairs of the cable will be supplied in a 30th anniversary presentation case. After this, the single-ended 'ISL' and 'IXLR' balanced versions will be made available in standard packaging. The cable will, of course, remain entirely unchanged.

It draws on the same broad design parameters, and is billed as inductance free, thanks to its proprietary construction. Supra is one of the few cable makers that extrudes, insulates and winds its own cable, rather than simply terminating off the reel. The non-inductive nature of the cable arises because half the 12 individually insulated conductors are wound clockwise, the other half anticlockwise, so there is no net magnetic field, and virtually no phase distortion. In some ways, the interconnect is an improvement on the speaker cable: there is no detachable

termination, and the plug produces a tight friction fit with the sockets when the plug collar is rotated. The wooden boss acts as a spacer for the two conductors and also indicates the direction of signal flow.

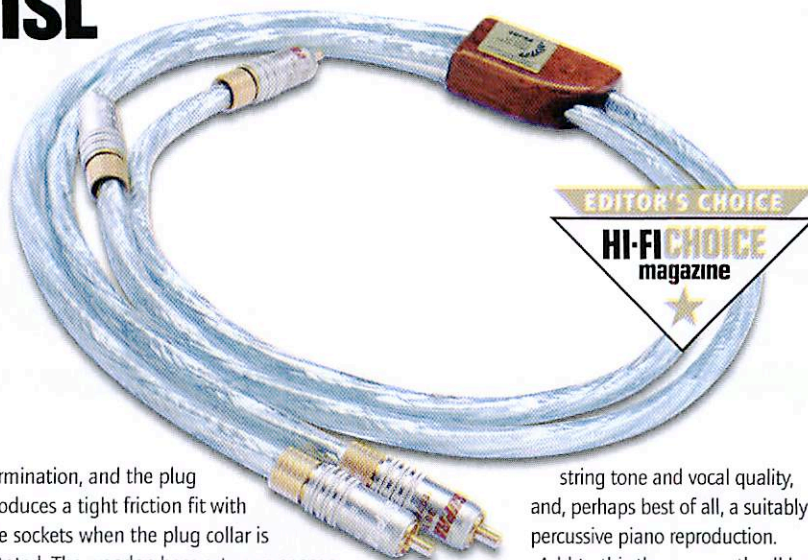
On audition, this is a very striking cable, in the best sense. It is bold, architectural and outgoing, with unsuppressed dynamics when the music gets going, but spaces between notes have an inky blackness that more than hints that the musical energy is going just where it was intended, with no bloat or overhang.

Detail is also abundant, but it is produced quite naturally, with wholly believable orchestral

string tone and vocal quality, and, perhaps best of all, a suitably percussive piano reproduction.

Add to this the apparently all but indestructible nature of the cable, which looks unlikely to give up the ghost as many cables do under long term reviewing conditions, and pricing looks more than fair. **HFC**

Alvin Gold



EDITOR'S CHOICE

HI-FI CHOICE
magazine



VERDICT

CONCLUSION

Genuine high-end performance and build quality in a package that is clearly destined to last.

HI-FI CHOICE
magazine
89%